

Partners in Preservation

The Columbia River and its tributaries cut through the landscape of the Pacific Northwest, exposing deep layers of history and heritage. Traces of this history are evident at pre-contact and historic archaeological sites and culturally significant places for Native American tribes and communities throughout the region. Pre-contact sites are those that are generally attributed as Native American and are older than written record. Historic sites are older than 50 years and are Euro-American. A federal partnership helps ensure that these irreplaceable and invaluable sites are preserved for future generations.

The Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) harvests the energy of 31 dams on the Columbia River and its tributaries, offering valuable benefits to the Northwest economy — namely clean, cost-effective and reliable electricity.

The FCRPS Cultural Resource Program manages cultural sites that can be impacted by the operations and maintenance of 14 of the dam and reservoir "projects." Fluctuating water levels in reservoirs can cause erosion or otherwise destroy or expose irreplaceable cultural resources.

The program has been in place since 1997 and is jointly managed and funded through a partnership between the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. To ensure compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act — and to ensure historic and cultural sites are managed for the benefit of all — these three federal agencies collaborate with 10 Native American tribes, four state historic preservation offices and several other federal land managers in eight separate cooperating groups.

Fiscal Year 2020 accomplishments

The FCRPS Cultural Resource Program and its implementers carry out the important work of identifying cultural sites, evaluating their historical significance, assessing the effects of FCRPS operations and maintenance on these sites, and determining how sites can best be preserved or managed. This fact sheet summarizes the results of program work from Oct. 1, 2019 through Sept. 30, 2020.

Inventory — Archaeologists and people with specialized knowledge of Native American traditional cultural places and practices identify cultural sites by doing research, surveying landscapes and interviewing Native American tribal elders. At present, inventory of accessible lands within the FCRPS projects is largely complete. In FY 2020, the FCRPS Cultural Resources Program accomplished the following inventory work:

- Completed field surveys of 633 acres to identify archaeological and historic sites.
- Located one new archaeological site, bringing the total number of recorded sites in the system to 4,817.
- Produced six reports and at least 12 individual forms documenting important cultural places known as traditional cultural properties (TCPs) or historic properties of religious and cultural significance to Indian tribes (HPRCSITs).

Evaluation — When sites are located, they are assessed for the information they convey about important historic events and figures or for specific architectural, engineering or artistic forms they exemplify. If a cultural site conveys this type of information, it may be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a "historic property."

The agencies completed five National Register eligibility determinations in FY 2020, all of which are newly eligible for listing in the National Register. In addition, a majority of TCP or HPRCSIT forms produced provide statements on potential eligibility.

Assessment of effects — Federal agencies must evaluate the effects of their actions, in this case operations and maintenance of the FCRPS dams and reservoirs, on cultural sites that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The agencies accomplish this through monitoring or visiting sites to document changes in their condition, physical or otherwise. Of the 181 sites monitored, 101 sites had physical changes in FY 2020.



McNary Dam, located just east of Umatilla, Oregon, is a 1.4-mile long concrete run-of-the-river dam which spans the Columbia River, separating Oregon from Washington. The dam came into operation in 1957, forming Lake Wallula, and is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District. Authorized purposes include: power, navigation, recreation, fish and wildlife, and incidental irrigation. There are approximately 242 miles of shoreline extending up the Columbia and Snake rivers and bordering the Washington Tri-Cities communities of Richland, Pasco, and Kennewick, 281 known archaeological sites and structures, and 103 traditional cultural properties. Regional affected tribes include the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Wanapum Band, and the Nez Perce Tribe. Lands surrounding the reservoir and the cultural resources present here continue to provide physical connections to traditional practices and beliefs for these tribal descendants.

Resolution of adverse effects — Federal agencies must resolve adverse effects on historic properties that result from their actions. Resolving adverse effects can take many forms, including stabilizing or rehabilitating existing sites, protecting culturally-sensitive areas, or creating interpretive signs, curricula, or presentations to educate the public or increase cultural perpetuation. Notable achievements in resolving adverse effects in FY 2020 are as follows:

Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers accomplishments

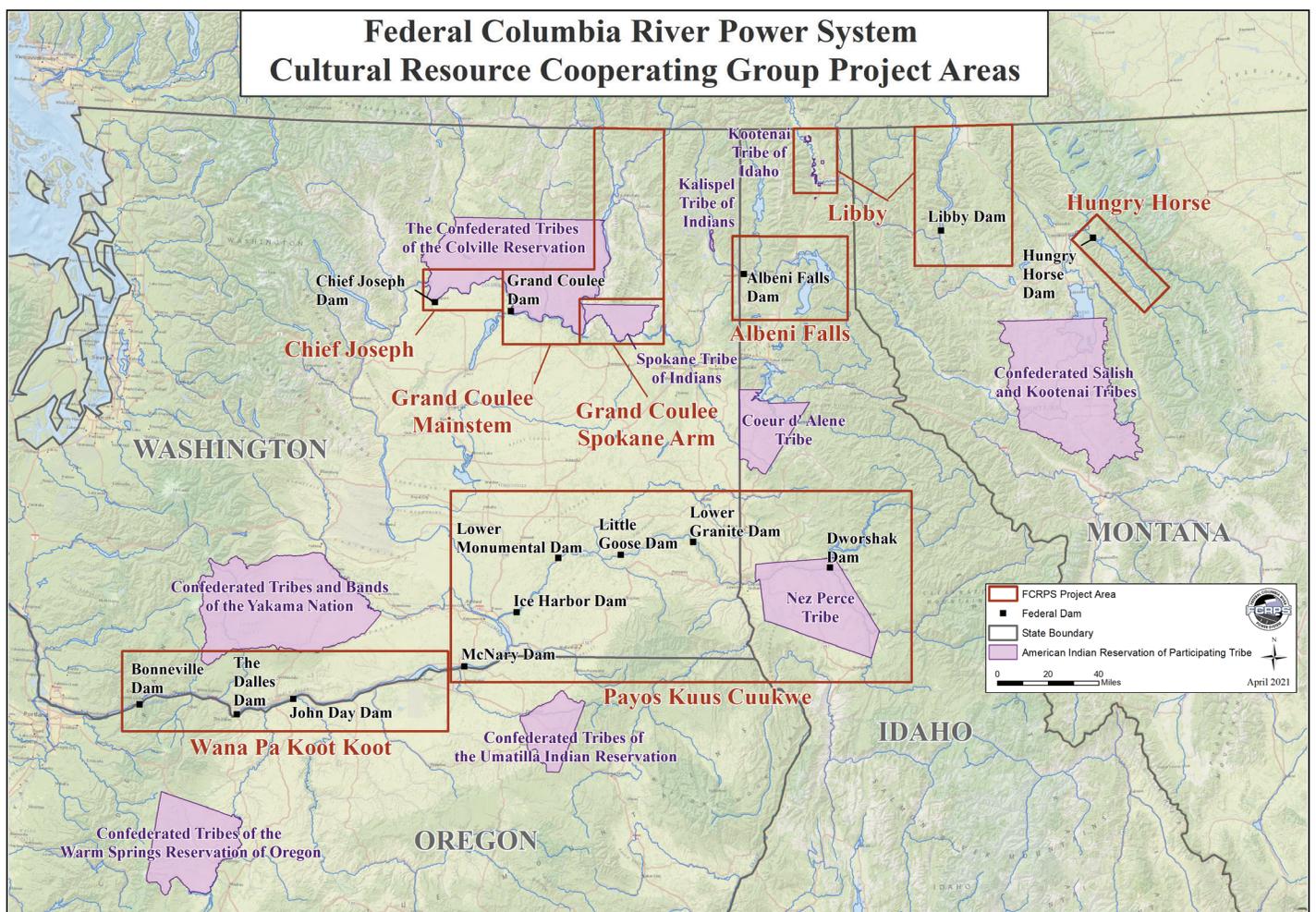
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation highlighted the importance of First Foods and treaty rights in multiple community outreach events.
- Stabilized pre-contact sites at The Dalles and Bonneville projects.
- Awarded a contract to relocate and assess several archaeological sites documented at The Dalles and John Day projects prior to inundation from the dams' construction.
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon hosted a community outreach event, providing education about the cultural resources work accomplished through the Wana Pa Koot Koot Cooperating Group.
- Hosted a tribal elders tour of sites in the vicinity of The Dalles Dam and the Temani Pesh-wa trail in Columbia Hills Historical State Park with representatives from regional participant tribes and agency staff.

Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers accomplishments

- Planted 200 willow cuttings and transplanted tule sedge to reduce shoreline erosion and dissuade swallows from forming nesting holes in the cut-bank at a McNary Project site.
- Tested graffiti removal and camouflage options and removed graffiti and camouflage at a rock image site, McNary Project.
- Funded participating tribes to survey for culturally significant plants and use ethnographic research to document the significance of the Palouse (Palus) Canyon TCP as part of off-site mitigation, Lower Monumental Project.



Rehabilitation of artifact collections from a site at the Chief Joseph Project resulted in updated photo documentation of this unique bear effigy pestle, likely used for grinding substances used in food and medicine.



This map shows the 14 hydroelectric dams and Cooperating Groups that make up the Federal Columbia River Power System Cultural Resource Program.

- Controlled non-native and invasive vegetation growing within a Nez Perce burial site, Lower Granite Project.
- Installed several signs at two sites within the McNary Project to promote prevention of adverse effects caused by recreation along areas prone to erosion and vandalism.

Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers accomplishments

- Awarded a contract for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT) to resurvey 560 acres of newly exposed land as a result of a devastating wildfire, Chief Joseph Project.
- Repaired previous site stabilization and assessed three additional stabilization areas for damage, Albeni Falls Project.
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes concluded a three-year study to create a database of a system of historic trails, integrating geographical mapping information with traditional cultural knowledge, Libby Project.
- Completed photographic documentation of approximately 400 tools from a site originally excavated in the 1970s. CCT are currently rehabilitating the artifact assemblage as partial mitigation for effects to the site, Chief Joseph Project.
- Finalized plans for the placement of signs to deter looting at the historic Jennings townsite, Libby Project.



In-progress bank stabilization of a pre-contact village site affected by erosion and recreation, The Dalles Project.



Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation archaeologist assessing eroding cutbank while conducting site condition monitoring, Lake Roosevelt, Grand Coulee Project.



Before and after images of rock imagery site clean-up, McNary Project.

Bureau of Reclamation accomplishments

- Completed multi-million dollar stabilization of a large pre-contact village site, Grand Coulee Project.
- Funded the CCT and Spokane Tribe of Indians to excavate sites severely compromised by annual reservoir draw-downs, Grand Coulee Project.
- CCT completed an analysis of Western Stemmed Tradition projectile points collected from the surface, publicly available on the [FCRPS Cultural Resource Program website](#), Grand Coulee Project.
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes prepared a Multiple Property Document on the indigenous trail network, Hungry Horse Project.
- Published an article on the logging history at Hungry Horse Reservoir in the Montana Magazine of Western History, available on the [FCRPS Cultural Resource Program website](#), Hungry Horse Project.

Next steps

Artifacts, significant cultural sites, historic properties and structures are non-renewable limited resources. Once destroyed, they are gone forever. To that end, the important work of the FCRPS Cultural Resource Program will continue preserving the rich history of people and traditional ways of life in the Pacific Northwest.

Cooperating groups, tribal participants, and state and federal agencies will build upon the inventory, evaluation and assessment, and important treatment and mitigation work accomplished in FY 2020 to continue to share management for the common goal of preserving the region's finite cultural resources for generations to come.